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STUDY OF PUNCTUALITY OF TEACHERS AND SHIKSHA MITRA AS WELL AS THE TOTAL TIME SPENT BY THEM IN SCHOOL ON A TEACHING DAY



Study Sponsored by:

**State Institute of Educational Management and Training
Allahabad**

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PREFACE

Education, as is well known, is essential for the development of human capital as well as to bring about socio-economic development of a state, region or country. In order to achieve this children must have access to education and also that the quality of education being imparted should be of good quality. Thus, the teachers occupy a very significant position as being the providers of quality education. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that the strength of teachers be adequate, that they be properly qualified for their job and should be dedicated towards their duties and responsibilities because children are the future of any society. The present study makes an effort at finding out the regularity with which the teachers are going to school everyday and are also teaching in accordance with the latest teaching and learning techniques which are regularly being developed to bring about qualitative improvements in education. The study is primarily based on a field survey conducted over 15 blocks from 5 districts identified for this purpose by SIEMAT, Allahabad. From these blocks all such schools were selected where Shiksha Mitra are teaching. We, therefore, covered a total of 838 primary schools. The study highlights the fact that all over the state there is an acute shortage of regular teachers. In fact, even now there are a number of single teacher schools. Moreover, the teachers are not only over burdened with work but are also not very regular and this adversely affects the quality of teaching.

The study was made possible because of the financial support provided by SIEMAT, Allahabad with whom the Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow has had a long association. We are therefore extremely thankful to Shri K.M. Tripathi, Director, SIEMAT and Dr. Najma Saxena who have been regularly asking the Giri Institute of Development Studies to conduct research studies for them. Dr. Saxena, was as usual, associated with the study from its initiation till the stage of its finalization.

During the course of the study we received full and complete co-operation from the BSA and his team of ABSAs in the districts of Bareilly, Basti, Sultanpur, Mahoba and Lalitpur. We are extremely thankful to them as well as to the BRC Coordinators of the 15 blocks selected from these 5 districts.

We are thankful to Prof. A.K. Singh, Director, Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow for providing us the infrastructure and other facilities.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In order to lay a proper foundation for the overall socio-economic development in a state or region, education plays a very significant role and elementary education in particular stands out as a crucial aspect of education mainly because of its contribution towards improving the productive capacity of the society as well as its various social, political, economic and scientific institutions. Education plays an important role in reducing poverty by increasing the value and efficiency of labour. This impact is particularly more significant among the poorer sections of society. Moreover, education becomes even more meaningful when traditional economies are in the process of getting transformed into modern ones through the adoption of new technologies and modern means of production.

Not only does elementary education make people literate, it also serves as the basic foundation of the basis of which higher education can be acquired by an individual. Keeping all these facts in mind it is mandatory that every child should be provided the benefit of easy access to elementary education. Merely the provision of education is not sufficient. What is equally important is that the quality of education being provided to children must also be good if an effective base for human capital development is to be achieved.

First the DPEP and now the SSA programmes have been laying greater and greater stress on the quality of education. To achieve this goal it is essential to ensure the full co-operation from the teachers. In the state of Uttar Pradesh the total number of regular teachers working in primary and upper primary schools is far below the

actual number of posts which have been sanctioned. This is a phenomenon found in all districts irrespective of the regions of the State. It is not possible to fill up all the vacant positions of teachers keeping in mind the different subjects as well as the reservation criterion.

In an effort to counter this problem arising out of shortage of regular teachers the government introduced the concept of Para Teachers or Shiksha Mitra as they are known in U.P. The Village Panchayats have been delegated power to select Shiksha Mitra for local schools. For this purpose a resolution is passed by the VEC and applications are invited from educated village youth. The candidate should have passed intermediate examination. However, persons holding B.Ed./LT degree will be given preference. The upper age limit has been fixed at 30 years. The VEC prepares a merit list of candidates on the basis of average marks secured at the high school, intermediate and B.Ed./LT. The candidate securing highest marks is selected. 50 per cent of Shiksha Mitra have to be females. The VEC finally takes the final decision regarding selection of the Shiksha Mitra in a meeting attended by two-third majority. A Committee, headed by the District Magistrate at the district level, receives the VEC resolution and after checking the same, releases the funds to the VEC account for honorarium to the Shiksha Mitra.

Shiksha Mitras are contracted by the VEC for one academic session. Prior to being positioned in the local school, the Shiksha Mitra is given a one month induction training by the DIETs. All Shiksha Mitras are paid Rs.2250 per month as fixed honorarium. In case his/her work is not found satisfactory the Shiksha Mitra can be removed by the VEC by a resolution passed by two-third majority. The services of a

Shiksha Mitra may be renewed in the next academic session and he/she is accorded another 15 day refresher training.

Shiksha Mitra are deployed in new schools, single teacher schools and schools with adverse teacher-pupil ratio. Earlier only one Shiksha Mitra was allotted per school but of late a school can have even two Shiksha Mitra. Although the Shiksha Mitra may not be as qualified as the regular teachers, they have generally proved beneficial because they are able to share the workload of teachers. This is particularly so in single teacher schools. In fact many Shiksha Mitra are proving to be excellent teachers and their performance is at par with the regular teachers.

While it is good that the government aims at imparting quality education it will be worthwhile to find out the extent to which teachers and Shiksha Mitra are going to school punctually and regularly as well as teaching in accordance with the teaching and learning materials made available to them in order to impart quality education to the children. It was with this in mind that the Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow, was entrusted the task of conducting such an evaluation by the State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT), Allahabad with the following objectives.

Objectives of the Study

- (1) To find out the percentage of Teachers/Shiksha Mitra who come to school on time as well as that of Teachers/Shiksha Mitras who are irregular.
- (2) To assess the actual instructional time given by teachers in class on a working day.
- (3) To assess the impact of teacher's punctuality and actual teaching in the class on the achievement level of children.

- (4) To seek the opinion of parents, students and the head master regarding teacher punctuality.
- (5) To estimate single teacher schools in the sample districts.
- (6) To estimate the number of schools closed temporarily due to teacher absenteeism.

Methodology and Sample Size

The study is mainly based on primary information collected by us from the primary schools from five selected districts of Uttar Pradesh. Initially we had proposed to select the five districts in such a way that at least one district would be covered from each of the four administrative regions of the State. The criterion to be adopted for selection which had been envisaged was that the selected districts would have a literacy percentage as close to that obtained in the state as a whole during the Census of India 2001. However, it was SIEMAT, Allahabad, which had its own preferences and the ultimate selection was done on the basis of the directives that were issued to us from Allahabad.

Once the districts had been identified the next task was that of block selection. Three blocks had to be selected from each of the five districts. For the purpose of block selection we took help from the BSA of each of the five districts and the team of officials working with him. As far as possible we tried to ensure that the district gets a fair coverage by selecting blocks which were located close as well as far away from the district headquarter. Once the blocks were selected we obtained a list of all such primary schools in each block which had Shiksha Mitra posted in them. This list was provided by the respective ABSA's or the Coordinators of the Block Resource Centres. Each and every school with Shiksha Mitra were then covered by us for the purpose of the study. In this way our final sample size worked out to be as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1.1: Detailed Information about the Sample Covered in the Study

Name of the District	Name of the Selected Blocks	No. of Primary Schools having Shiksha Mitra
Bareilly	--	105
	Kyara	24
	Fatehganj (West)	53
	Bhojipura	28
Basti	--	182
	Sadar	54
	Kaptanganj	51
	Haraiyya	77
Sultanpur	--	144
	Pratappur Kamecha	56
	Bhader	39
	Bhetuwa	49
Mahoba	--	141
	Kabrai	56
	Charkari	40
	Jaitpur	45
Lalitpur	--	266
	Jakhora	105
	Mahroni	86
	Bar	75
Total : 5 Districts	15 Blocks	838 Primary Schools

Source: BSA Office and BRC's.

In order to collect the primary information to suit the requirements of our study we designed two sets of schedules. The first schedule was developed to collect information about the primary schools. It was designed to know details about the school infrastructure, strength of teachers and Shiksha Mitras and their qualifications, strength of students, regularity of teachers as well as the perception of teachers and Shiksha Mitra.

The second schedule was designed to obtain information from the parents whose children were enrolled in the primary schools being surveyed by us as well as the community leaders/influential persons living in the area regarding the regularity with which teachers attend school and the quality of education which they impart and their overall views regarding elementary education in their area.

Both the schedules prepared by us were duly approved by SIEMAT, Allahabad, before we initiated our field survey.

Besides primary information, we also collected some secondary information pertaining to details of primary schools, primary teachers, Shiksha Mitra, enrolment of children, etc. at the level of the districts and blocks selected by us. This information was compiled with the co-operation of the BSA and the co-ordinators of our selected BRCs.

The field work was initiated from around 7 March 2005. Since we were working with a very strict time schedule field work had to be covered in an unusually short-time period. Our task was made all the more difficult because the BSA of all districts and some of the ABSA's had been assigned duties in connection with the U.P. Board examinations, which were in progress at the time of our field survey. The field team, therefore, did a credible work of data collection under these conditions.

About our Selected Districts and Blocks

Before we begin the analysis of information collected from the selected primary schools it would be appropriate to present a very brief picture about the primary education in our selected districts and blocks. These details related to number of primary schools, total teachers, Shiksha Mitra, enrolment, etc. are being provided in Table 2.

**Table 1.2: Details of Primary Schools, Teachers and Enrolment
in Selected Districts/Blocks**

District/Selected Blocks	No. of Primary Schools	Enrolment (Nos.)			Regular Teachers (Nos.)	Average No. of Teachers per School	Teacher-Pupil Ratio (only Regular Teachers)	No. of Schools having Shiksha Mitra	No. of Shiksha Mitra	Adjusted Teacher-Pupil Ratio (including Shiksha Mitra)
		Boys	Girls	Total						
1. Bareilly	1702	204579	183920	388499	3173	1.86	118	105	1351	86
(a) Kyara	67	9932	9171	19103	295	4.40	65	24	28	59
(b) Fatehganj (W)	88	8776	8564	17340	202	2.30	86	53	61	66
(c) Bhojipura	107	12587	11832	24419	336	3.14	73	28	35	66
2. Basti	1378	124189	126959	251148	3313	2.40	76	182	1238	55
(a) Sadar	113	8561	5364	13925	262	2.32	53	54	67	42
(b) Kaptanganj	75	5432	3943	9375	179	2.39	52	51	53	40
(c) Haraiyya	110	7513	6237	13753	183	1.66	75	77	77	53
3. Sultanpur	2116	199234	203931	403165	4065	1.92	99	144	1665	70
(a) Pratappur Kamecha	78	7065	7764	14869	144	1.85	103	56	56	74
(b) Bhader	65	6193	6566	12759	130	2.00	98	39	54	69
(c) Bhetuwa	69	5040	5688	10728	120	1.74	89	49	58	60
4. Mahoba	606	44744	42807	87551	1164	1.92	75	141	237	62
(a) Kabrai	193	16525	15379	31904	347	1.80	92	56	59	79
(b) Charkari	126	7997	7630	15627	270	2.14	58	40	43	50
(c) Jaitpur	134	9966	9384	19350	260	1.94	74	45	49	63
5. Lalitpur	872	72262	66224	138466	1337	1.53	104	266	862	63
(a) Jakhora	155	13380	12351	25771	303	1.95	85	105	142	58
(b) Mahroni	121	10191	10282	20473	186	1.54	110	86	105	70
(c) Bar	119	11199	9530	20729	162	1.36	128	75	89	83

N.B.: The number of blocks in Bareilly and Basti are 15 and 14 respectively and in Sultanpur it is as high as 23. However, in Mahoba and Lalitpur there are only 4 and 6 blocks respectively.

Source: Office of the BSA and concerned BRCs.

Since Bareilly, Basti and Sultanpur are districts having more blocks they automatically also have a much higher number of primary schools located in them. Bareilly and Basti have 15 and 14 blocks each while the total number of blocks in Sultanpur is as high as 23. As compared to these three districts, Mahoba and Lalitpur, on the other hand, have only 4 and 6 blocks each respectively. However, when we look at figures of number of primary schools per block on an average we find that the situation is reversed. Bareilly has on an average 113 primary schools per block while

the corresponding figures in case of Basti and Sultanpur is 98 and 92 respectively. But when we look at the two districts of Bundelkhand region, viz. Mahoba and Lalitpur, the average number of primary schools per block works out to be much higher at 151 and 145 respectively.

It has already been indicated earlier that there is a general shortage of regular teachers all over the state. The total number of sanctioned posts are much more as compared to the actual number who are presently employed. Consequently, the share of vacant posts in total sanctioned posts is quite high. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has fixed a norm of that there should be at least two regular teachers in every primary school considering the fact that a primary school enrolls children from Class I to Class V. The shortage of teachers even in our selected districts is brought out very clearly in Table 2 as well. Out of the five selected districts, the only exception is Basti where the average number of regular teachers is 2.40 per primary school. Even this is barely around the prescribed norm only. In all the other districts the average is below 2 teachers. The situation is slightly better at the level of our selected blocks since we find that in nearly half the blocks the average number of regular teachers works out to be more than two teachers. In fact, this average in the case of Kyara block of Bareilly is as high as 4.40, which is the highest among all our 15 selected blocks. The block with the next best average of 3.14 is Bhojipura once again from Bareilly district. We therefore, find that despite the fact that Bareilly district itself on an average has less than two regular teachers per primary school, all the selected block^s have an average in excess of the prescribed norm. Basti is the other district in which two of the three blocks have more than two teachers per primary school. On the contrary there was not even a single block in Lalitpur district, which satisfies the prescribed norm.

The most serious problem which primary schools with less teachers are faced with arise when any teacher requires leave on account of illness or some other reason. The other situation arises when a teacher has to be absent from school on some official duty such as attending a training at the DIET or BRC. These in-service trainings are compulsory and may last upto a week depending on the nature of training. If it is a single teacher school it will be closed down and even if there are two teachers the workload falling on one teacher as a result of the other being on leave will be unmanageable.

The other indicator, which shows the level of adequacy or otherwise of teachers in a primary school, is the teacher-pupil ratio. As per the norm prescribed under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan the teacher-pupil ratio should be 1:40. As is quite evident from Table 2 we do not have even one district or even a single block, which fulfills this norm. Among our selected districts the teacher-pupil ratio is as high as 118 and 104 in the case of Bareilly and Lalitpur and nearly 100 in the case of Sultanpur. The two remaining districts of Basti and Mahoba are relatively better with a teacher-pupil ratio of around 75.

The situation is almost as bad at the block level as well. We have one block of Sultanpur and two in Lalitpur where teacher-pupil ratio exceeds 100. In fact, it is as high as 128 in the Bar block of Lalitpur. However, there are two blocks of Basti namely Sadar and Kaptanganj where this ratio is much lower although above the prescribed norm. Same is the case with Charkari block of Mahoba. In each of the three blocks mentioned above this ratio ranges between 52 and 58.

These two indicators therefore go on to highlight the significance of Shiksha Mitra in order to compensate for the loss of regular teachers. Even if we fulfill the basic

norm of two teachers per primary school, we must bear in mind that teaching has to be conducted for five classes in each school. Moreover, a large number of primary schools have large number of children enrolled in them. Consequently the average number of students per class goes up proportionately. Managing five classes with two teachers is difficult in itself but the problem gets compounded in schools, where the strength of students is also high. Thus, the policy of the government to appoint Shiksha Mitra in order to increase the strength of teachers in the primary schools was a very well thought out step and it has not only eased the workload on regular teachers but has also brought about an all round change in schools for the better. A Shiksha Mitra is aware of the fact that although he/she has been appointed for only one academic session, there is a provision for getting reappointed. As a result it is in his/her interest to put in hard work and teach well and regularly. In fact, in many cases Shiksha Mitra are proving to be even more efficient than regular teachers. The regular teacher, on the other hand, is aware of the fact that his job is secure and so there are cases of teachers who tend to take their work less seriously than is expected of them.

However, it may be pointed out that there are some problems in the procedure laid down for the selection of Shiksha Mitra not only for their initial appointment but also when they have to be reappointed. With the result that the selection process tends to become tedious and time consuming. Consequently, schools remain deprived of the services of a Shiksha Mitra when they are needed most urgently like at the beginning of an academic session itself. It is, therefore, essential that appropriate changes should be made in the existing procedure of selection to make it easy and less time consuming. As it is, there is a situation where the sanctioned posts of regular teachers have been lying vacant. If care is not taken in the case of Shiksha Mitra we might be caught in a

situation where the targets fixed for their appointment may also remain unfulfilled because of the existing bottlenecks.

Table 2 clearly highlights the fact that the teacher-pupil ratio has improved appreciably as a result of the posting of Shiksha Mitra in the various primary schools in our selected districts and blocks. However, the initial ratio was so adverse that even after taking into account the additional position of Shiksha Mitra the norm of 40 students per teacher has still not been achieved in any of our five selected districts. The best among districts is Basti where this ratio is 55. However, there are two blocks of Basti namely Sadar and Kaptanganj where the teacher-pupil ratio has come down to 40. In many blocks even the adjusted teacher-pupil ratio is in excess of 60. This again emphasizes the point that if good quality education is to be assured then this shortage of teachers has to be reduced further.

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS

In the previous chapter we have already indicated that all the schools in the 15 blocks selected by us from the 5 districts which had Shiksha Mitra appointed in them were covered by us for this study. The total number of such schools in all five districts taken together was 838. In this chapter we will try to highlight the basic characteristics of these schools in terms of their facilities such as number of classrooms, play ground, drinking water and toilet, etc., details about teachers and Shiksha Mitra such as their qualifications, length of services, etc. and enrolment.

Table 2.1 highlights some of the general features of our selected schools from the five districts. If we look at the levels of enrolment we find that on an average each primary school has sufficient number of children enrolled in them. Average enrolment was found to be the highest in the case of Bareilly (215 children) and was lowest in Mahoba (167 children). In the remaining three districts average figures of enrolment per primary school were quite similar ranging between around 185-190 children. Even if we look at the 15 blocks it is found that there is not too much fluctuation in the figures of enrolment per school from the district average. Taking the 15 blocks individually the Kyara block of Bareilly has the highest figure of average enrolment (247 children) while the block with lowest number of children per school on an average is the Charkari block of district Mahoba (143 children).

Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan the norm which has been prescribed is that each primary school must have at least two regular teachers. As can be seen from Table 2.1 only district which fulfills this condition is Bareilly. The average number of teachers,

taking the 105 primary schools together, works out to be 2.04. Therefore, even in Bareilly the norm is just about achieved. In the two districts of eastern region, viz. Basti and Sultanpur the average number of teachers per school works out to around 1.75. The situation is even worse in the districts of Mahoba and Lalitpur which form part of the Bundelkhand division since the average number of teachers per primary school is barely around 1.5. When we look at the blocks individually only two blocks viz, Kyara and Bhojipura have, on an average, more than two regular teachers per primary school. The situation is really bad in all the three blocks of Lalitpur. Block Jakhora which is the best among the three blocks has 1.34 teachers per school. In the remaining two blocks of Mahroni and Bar the corresponding figures are as low as 1.11 and 1.08 which indicates a high presence of single teacher schools.

In terms of school infrastructure we have looked at average number of class rooms per school, and whether or not the school has a room for teachers, verandah, play ground, boundary wall, etc. We will now take up each of these items individually.

- (a) **Class Rooms:** The norm as laid down under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, says that each primary school must have at least two classrooms. Under the DPEP earlier and now under SSA many schools have also been provided funds for the construction of an additional room in schools which had relatively more children. The table highlights this fact since in all the districts the average number of classrooms is above two, we find a similar picture in the blocks as well.
- (b) **Verandah:** In all the primary schools verandah is an important area which serves as a regular classroom. Not only does it act as an extra classroom for accommodating children of five classes but it is very useful while serving the mid-day meals. There were only five schools from each of the districts of Bareilly

and Sultanpur which did not have a verandah. However, in the case of our selected districts from Bundelkhand around 13.5 and 12.8 per cent schools of Mahoba and Lalitpur respectively did not have verandahs.

- (c) **Playground:** Once a village has been identified for the construction of a primary school it becomes the responsibility of the village community to find a suitable location for the school. The land is usually donated by some one and it is duly registered in the name of the school. Land which is donated is usually only big enough for the construction of the school building and generally not much space is left for converting it into a playground. Thus, the share of schools having enough space to serve as a play field is not very high. However, in Bareilly the situation is relatively much better since only around 17 per cent of our selected schools do not have a play ground. Lalitpur on the other hand is the district where the percentage of schools without a play ground is as high as 84. In the remaining three districts this percentage is between 29 and 35.
- (d) **Drinking Water:** Even since the DPEP was implemented stress has been laid to ensure that every school is provided drinking water facility. However, our survey has brought to light the fact that even in 2005 there are schools without this facility. Bareilly fortunately is the district where only one school out of the 105 surveyed by us did not have a hand pump. The situation was bad in Lalitpur where as many as one-fourth of the primary schools do not have hand pumps. In terms of absolute numbers the remaining district have almost identical number of schools without handpumps.
- (e) **Toilets:** Like drinking water, toilet is another facility which is expected to be provided by all schools. The plan approved for all new schools has this provision.

In fact the provision is to have separate bathrooms for boys as well as girls. Among our selected districts the two from the eastern region of the state, viz. Basti and Sultanpur are the worst affected where around 31 and 44 per cent schools do not have toilets. Just like the DPEP earlier and now SSA has provision for construction of additional classrooms, it also has funds which have been allotted for provision of drinking water and toilets. The schools must, therefore, apply for the additional grant and ensure that this facility is made available in the school at the earliest.

Looking at these main facilities and also into the location of the schools and their level of cleanliness we have tried to grade the schools as good, average or poor. In the case of Bareilly they are almost evenly divided in the good and average category with very few falling in the category of poor schools. In the case of the schools from the eastern region the concentration of schools was found in the average category – Basti 59 per cent and Sultanpur 57 per cent. Those falling in the category 'good' constituted around 38 and 31 per cent in these two districts respectively. Mahoba was the district where around 65 per cent schools are good, while the rest are average. In Lalitpur on the other hand around half the schools are average while nearly 10 per cent are in the poor category.

While we have made our own grades, the officials from the BSA office grade the schools on the basis of their own fixed criterion. These grades range from Grade A to Grade D. The table highlights the fact that a large majority of the schools fall in grade B irrespective of the district in question. In Bareilly almost three-fourths of the schools are grade B. In Basti and Sultanpur the corresponding figures are 71 and 88 per cent respectively. While in the case of Mahoba and Lalitpur around 67 and 71 per cent of the

schools have been given Grade B. If we look at the grading given earlier we find some minor fluctuations in Bareilly and Lalitpur districts while the grades are almost similar in the remaining three districts.

Table 2.1: District-wise Details of Selected Primary Schools

Details	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
Total No. of Primary Schools	105	182	144	141	266
Distribution of Schools by Grades (Present Position)					
A Grade	22	33	19	19	41
B Grade	77	130	124	94	190
C Grade	5	17	1	28	30
D Grade	1	2	--	--	--
Distribution of Schools by Grades (Previous Position)					
A Grade	16	22	15	14	25
B Grade	83	131	124	91	159
C Grade	6	27	4	32	58
D Grade	--	2	--	1	5
Total Enrolment (Nos.)	22525	34860	26693	23582	49666
Average Enrolment per School	215	192	185	167	187
Total No. of Teachers	214	318	255	220	411
Average No. of Teachers per School	2.04	1.74	1.77	1.56	1.55
Normal Attendance (%)	80	84	85	83	71
Average No. of Classrooms	2.66	2.65	2.35	2.64	2.58
Schools not having:					
(a) Teachers' Room	Nil	4	18	25	89
(b) Verandah	5	Nil	5	19	34
(c) Playground	18	53	52	44	224
(d) Boundary Wall	90	168	128	98	95
(e) Drinking Water	1	21	22	25	68
(f) Toilet	33	57	63	23	20
General Situation of Schools:					
(a) Good	53	69	45	92	111
(b) Average	49	108	82	55	130
(c) Poor	3	5	17	4	25

Having looked at the general features of our selected schools it is equally important to talk of the teachers who are posted in them. We have provided details about their sex, age, educational qualifications and length of service for the

headmasters, assistant teachers and Shiksha Mitra separately and this information is presented in tabular form in Tables 2.2(a), 2.2(b) and 2.2(c).

Looking at the details regarding headmasters, the first thing which is observed is that not all the selected schools of any of the five districts has a regular headmaster. In barely three-fourths of the schools of Mahoba we found a regular headmaster. Basti was the best district in this regard with a headmaster in 98 per cent schools. It was closely followed by Sultanpur (92 per cent). In the remaining districts the percentage of schools with a regular headmaster was 87 in each district. The other fact which emerges is that the position of headmaster is predominantly held by males. Only Sultanpur and Lalitpur were the two districts where the position of headmaster is held by females in 15 per cent schools. The average age of the headmasters ranges between 52-57 years. Since all headmasters are in the age group of over 50 years, it is only natural that a very high majority of them have put in considerable number of years of service since their initial appointment. In the case of Sultanpur and Bareilly 84 and 89 per cent of the headmasters have put in over 25 years of service. In the case of Basti and Mahoba this percentage is identical (78 per cent). Lalitpur, however, is the only exception since the proportion of headmasters with service in excess of 25 years is only 38 per cent.

Since these headmasters have been serving the Basic Shiksha Parishad for so many years it is natural that their educational qualification is only high school or intermediate. In three districts out of five (Bareilly, Sultanpur and Lalitpur) the proportion of headmasters having passed only high school or intermediate is 85 per cent or above. In the remaining two districts it is 74 per cent (in Basti) and 79 per cent (in Mahoba) [Table 2.2(a)].

Table 2.2(a): Details about Headmasters

Details	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
No. of Headmasters:					
Male	83	156	111	107	191
Female	8	23	22	14	40
Total	91	179	133	121	231
Average Age of Headmasters	56	55	57	53	52
Educational Qualifications of Headmaster:					
(a) Upto Intermediate	80	133	114	96	200
(b) Graduate and above	11	46	19	25	31
Year of Joining Service:					
(a) Above 15 years	30	36	56	32	25
(b) 5 – 15 years	46	104	63	63	63
(c) Below 5 years	50	39	40	26	143
Year of Present Posting:					
(a) Above 10 years	28	38	52	26	52
(b) 5 – 10 years	19	71	28	41	76
(c) Below 5 Years	44	70	53	54	103

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We also tried to find out the number of years for which these headmasters have remained posted in the school where they are presently working. The time spans selected are above 10 years, 5 to 10 years and below 5 years. In each of the selected districts the maximum number of headmasters are found in the below 5 years group [Table 2.2(a)].

If we look at the assistant teachers it is once again revealed that Bareilly is the only district which has at least one assistant teacher in each of the 105 schools surveyed by us. In all the other districts the total number of schools exceed the total number of assistant teachers posted in them. In Lalitpur for instance there are only 180 teachers in the 266 primary schools [Table 2.2(b)]

It was quite natural that the average age of assistant teachers was much below that of the headmasters and ranged between 35 years in Lalitpur and 43 years in Basti district. Being relatively younger in age it automatically followed that the number of years of services put in by them is also relatively less. The maximum concentration was

found in the group of 5 to 15 years. In Lalitpur, Sultanpur and Bareilly around 62 per cent teachers were found in this group. The share was lowest in the case of Basti (53 per cent). Being younger in age they are relatively more educationally qualified than the headmasters. Around 70 per cent assistant teachers of Bareilly, Mahoba and Lalitpur were graduates or post-graduates. However, the district which had the distinction of highest percentage of graduates/post-graduates was Sultanpur (84 per cent). It was surprising to find that Basti was the only district which had a relatively low share of teachers with educational qualifications of graduate and above (37 per cent only).

Table 2.2(b): **Details about Assistant Teachers**

Details	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
No. of Assistant Teachers:					
Male	80	76	94	70	104
Female	43	63	28	29	76
Total	123	139	122	99	180
Average Age	39	43	38	39	35
Educational Qualifications:					
(a) Upto Intermediate	36	87	20	28	53
(b) Graduate and above	87	52	102	71	127
Year of Joining Service:					
(a) Above 35 years	21	54	34	12	7
(b) 25 – 35 years	75	74	76	68	112
(c) Below 25 years	27	11	21	19	61
Year of Present Posting:					
(a) Above 10 years	26	29	39	9	13
(b) 5 – 10 years	29	32	43	34	56
(c) Below 5 Years	68	78	40	56	115

In terms of the length of posting in the school where they are presently posted most of them are found in the time group of below five years in four out of the five districts. Among the districts Lalitpur has as many as 64 per cent teachers concentrated in this group. Sultanpur is the only exception where the teachers are almost evenly distributed in the three groups as can be seen from Table 2.2(b).

Shiksha Mitra, as we know, share the burden of the regular teachers which are in short supply. The procedure adopted for their selection, etc. has already been discussed in detail. Details regarding their numbers in the selected blocks and qualifications, etc. are provided in Table 2.2(c). As it is evident from the table the total number of Shiksha Mitra posted in each of the selected districts is more than the number of schools surveyed by us in the district. In Bareilly the sex-wise distribution of Shiksha Mitra is identical. Even in Mahoba male and female Shiksha Mitra are almost equal. In the two districts of the eastern region, viz. Basti and Sultanpur the proportion of females is higher as compared to their male counterparts. Lalitpur, on the other hand, is the district where male Shiksha Mitra outnumber females by almost two times. The average age of Shiksha Mitra ranges from mid-twenties to late twenties.

Table 2.2(c): **Details about Shiksha Mitras**

Details	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
No. of Shiksha Mitras:					
Male	67	89	68	72	222
Female	67	108	100	79	114
Total	124	197	168	151	336
Average Age	24	27	25	28	27
Educational Qualifications:					
(a) Upto Intermediate	50	75	58	71	137
(b) Graduate and above	74	122	110	80	199
Year of Joining Service:					
(a) Upto 5 Years	27	94	94	56	65
(b) Below 5 years	97	103	74	95	271
Year of Present Posting:					
(a) More than 4 years	27	47	20	13	49
(b) 2-4 years	7	52	100	111	124
(c) Below 2 Years	90	98	48	27	163

As was the case with assistant teachers the Shiksha Mitra are educationally well qualified because in four out of the five blocks a larger proportion are graduates or post-graduates. In Mahoba and Lalitpur 53 and 59 per cent Shiksha Mitra respectively are graduates or above. In the other 3 districts this percentage is over 60 per cent.

There is a provision of re-appointment of Shiksha Mitra although they are appointed for one academic session at a time and that explains why some have been working in the primary schools for over 4 years or between 2-4 years.

To sum up, therefore, we may say that each primary school has sufficient number of children enrolled in them. However, in comparison to the strength of children in school the strength of regular teachers is low and even the norm fixed under SSA for the provision of at least two regular teachers per primary school is not being met except in the case of Bareilly district. This, in turn, is indicative of the importance of providing schools with Shiksha Mitra. The data collected by us highlights the fact that in many schools there is more than one Shiksha Mitra and consequently the workload on regular teachers has eased relatively. Not all the schools covered by us in all districts even had a headmaster. The assistant teachers and Shiksha Mitra have relatively better educational qualifications as compared to the headmasters. The headmasters were predominantly male while a high proportion of Shiksha Mitra were females.

In the next chapter we will make an effort to link our analysis to our first two objectives of the study, viz. punctuality of teachers and average time spent by a teacher in school on a teaching day.

CHAPTER III

PUNCTUALITY OF TEACHERS AND TEACHING

Having given an account of type of facilities available in the schools surveyed by us on a district-wise basis in terms of infrastructure, strength of teachers and their qualification, etc., it is proposed in this chapter to focus our attention on analysing the data collected by us from the point of view of the three objectives of the study. Before the actual analysis is taken up, it will be appropriate to indicate the objectives which are being kept in mind while conducting our analysis.

Objective No.1. To find out the percentage of Teachers/Shiksha Mitra who come to school on time as well as those who are irregular.

Objective No.2. To assess the actual instructional time given by teachers in class on a working day.

Objective No.4 To seek the opinion of parents, students and the head master regarding teacher punctuality.

The regularity with which teachers come to school is important and equally important is that they should be present in accordance with the school timings. Punctuality about time is important because it sets the tone for the full working day. One of the ways to assess the punctuality of teachers is by analysing the distance of their residence from the school where they teach. We have collected this information for the headmasters, assistant teachers as well as Shiksha Mitra separately and these details are provided in Tables 3.1(a), 3.1(b) and 3.1(c).

In the case of the headmasters we find that if we take all the headmasters of the five selected districts only around one-fourth of them are actually residing within the village itself. The lowest proportion of headmasters residing within

the village was found in the schools of Bareilly district (only 16 per cent). In the two districts of Basti and Sultanpur there is only a marginal improvement since 22 and 20 per cent headmasters respectively are residing within the village. The situation is relatively better in Mahoba (40 per cent) and also in Lalitpur (33 per cent). Those who are not living within the village are living upto a maximum distance of 30 kms. in the case of Bareilly, around 25 kms. in Basti and Mahoba districts and around 45 kms. in district Sultanpur. The maximum distance which any of the 231 headmasters of Lalitpur are covering is as high as 60 kms. The mode of conveyance used by them for reaching school vary from rail, bus, motorcycle, cycle and tempo. However, the most commonly used mode is the cycle. As many as around 75 per cent of the headmasters travel by cycle in Basti, Bareilly and Sultanpur. This proportion is relatively less in Mahoba (46 per cent) and Lalitpur (40 per cent). The average distance covered by these headmasters ranges from 5 to 10 kms. in our five selected districts. The most important reason cited by the headmasters for not staying within the village itself is that they own the house where they are presently residing. In the case of Bareilly nearly 86 per cent of our headmasters own a house. This percentage is fairly high even in the case of Basti (76 per cent) and Sultanpur (79 per cent). In the remaining two districts, however, the proportion of headmasters residing in their own houses in different locations than the primary school of their posting is relatively much lower. It is 54 per cent and 60 per cent in Mahoba and Lalitpur respectively. Besides this two other reasons have also been cited for not residing within the village. Between them the reason which emerges as relatively more important is that the village where they are posted in lacks proper housing facilities. The third reason is that their families are residing elsewhere for one reason or another and so they prefer to stay with them.

**Table 3.1(a): Proximity of the School and Teacher's Residence
(HEADMASTERS)**

Details	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
1. Distance Covered					
Within village	15	39	27	49	77
0-5 kms.	36	94	55	25	51
5-10 kms.	20	44	33	33	57
10-20 kms.	9	1	17	12	39
20 kms and above	11	1	1	2	7
2. Average Distance (km.)	9	5	7	8	10
3. Average Time taken in reaching school (in minutes)	29	33	42	33	32
4. Mode of Conveyance					
Rail	1	--	--	--	1
Bus	7	2	8	8	25
Motor Cycle	7	11	13	16	55
Cycle	56	104	74	33	62
Tempo	2	--	--	--	2
On Foot	3	23	11	15	9
5. Reasons for Staying Outside					
Own house	65	106	84	39	92
Lack of Facility	11	30	4	21	29
Living with Family	--	4	18	12	33

Turning our attention to the assistant teachers the situation is equally bad. In fact if we work out the percentage of teachers from all the five districts together then only 22 per cent of the teachers are staying within the village itself where the primary school is located. If we look at each of the districts individually we find that in the case of Bareilly only around 9 per cent of the assistant teachers are living within the village. In Basti and Sultanpur this percentage is only around 20. Even in Lalitpur and Mahoba districts the proportion of teachers residing in the village itself is 26 and 33 per cent respectively. The teachers who are living outside the village are covering a maximum distance of 25 kms in the case of Basti district. In the case of Sultanpur we have one teacher who is covering 70 kms per day to reach school. This is the highest distance among all the five selected districts. The teacher concerned is commuting daily by bus. The average distance covered to reach school ranges between 7 to 16 kms. in the five

selected districts. Consequently the teachers are spending on an average 30-45 minutes per day to reach school.

Because the distances covered by these teachers is relatively much more those traveling by bus is relatively much higher as compared to the headmasters. With distances being higher it is also less convenient to use a cycle so we have a reasonable number of teachers in all the five selected districts who have a motorcycle.

In a situation where around 75 per cent headmasters and assistant teachers are not residing within the village and are covering distances of upto 60-70 kms to reach the school, it is rather doubtful as to how they all come to school as regularly as reported by them.

As was the case with the headmasters, the assistant teachers too have reported that the reasons for not staying within the village are that they own the house in which they are residing. The share of such teachers among those residing outside the village is as high as around 80 per cent in Bareilly and Sultanpur. In the remaining three districts, however, their percentage is below 60. Lack of housing facilities and preference to stay with their family are the other reasons why these teachers prefer to stay outside the village [Table 3.1(b)]

In a situation where around 75 per cent of the headmasters as well as the assistant teachers are preferring to stay away from the villages and that too at distances of upto 60-70 kms from the school it is a matter which calls for proper investigation to find out the truth about the regularity with which they reach school on time every day. When you are traveling by bus or in some cases by train you are constrained with the punctuality of bus and rail services which prevail in the area. Even if one is traveling by a motorcycle or cycle there can be various reasons for being late to school.

Table 3.1(b): **Proximity of the School and Teacher's Residence**
(ASSISTANT TEACHERS)

Details	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
1. <u>Distance Covered</u>					
Within village	11	31	24	31	47
0-5 kms.	21	77	55	26	25
5-10 kms.	36	24	24	27	51
10-20 kms.	35	6	11	11	35
20 kms and above	20	1	8	4	22
2. <u>Average Distance (km.)</u>	12	7	8	11	16
3. <u>Average Time taken in reaching school (in minutes)</u>	44	30	36	34	41
4. <u>Mode of Conveyance</u>					
Rail	5	--	--	--	--
Bus	30	14	8	20	42
Motor Cycle	24	16	33	17	51
Cycle	41	48	45	24	28
Tempo	7	--	5	--	3
On Foot	5	30	7	7	9
5. <u>Reasons for Staying Outside</u>					
Own house	90	62	80	40	77
Lack of Facility	12	33	10	19	26
Living with Family	11	13	8	9	30

As far as the Shiksha Mitra are concerned, the very provision for their appointment is to try and select them from within the village where the school is located. Otherwise the Shiksha Mitra has to be from within the same Gram Sabha. This explains why an overwhelming percentage of our Shiksha Mitra reside within the village itself. This figure is around 84 per cent if we take the total of all Shiksha Mitra in our selected districts. Taking the districts individually Shiksha Mitra residing within the village constitute over 90 per cent in the districts of Bareilly, Basti and Sultanpur. Even in Mahoba the share is around 83 per cent. However, it is relatively much lower in Lalitpur (71 per cent only). These are the only two districts where Shiksha Mitra are covering 20 or more kilometres per day to reach the school. Thus, the average time taken to reach school ranges from around 15 minutes in Basti to around half an hour in Mahoba and Lalitpur [Table 3.1(c)].

Table 3.1(c): Proximity of the School and Teacher's Residence
(SHIKSHA MITRA)

Details	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
1. Distance Covered					
Within village	113	183	160	125	242
0-5 kms.	10	14	6	14	58
5-10 kms.	--	--	2	7	24
10-20 kms.	1	--	--	3	8
20 kms and above	--	--	--	2	4
2. Average Distance (km.)	4	2	3	8	7
3. Average Time taken in reaching school (in minutes)	20	15	17	33	28
4. Mode of Conveyance					
Rail	--	--	--	--	--
Bus	1	--	1	4	16
Motor Cycle	1	--	1	5	15
Cycle	5	9	6	12	15
Tempo	1	--	--	--	2
On Foot	3	5	--	5	46
5. Reasons for Staying Outside					
Own house	8	11	6	24	71
Lack of Facility	3	--	1	2	13
Living with Family	--	3	1	--	10

Table 3.2 provides details regarding teaching, teaching hours and regularity of teachers and Shiksha Mitra as reported by the headmaster and details of leave availed during the last month. Between July and January, the period for which the primary schools have remained open during the period just before our field survey the months of September, October and November have been months of excessive holidays and the schools have remained open for barely 18 days per month on an average. However, the other months have been normal with around 25 working days.

All the schools run by the Basic Shiksha Parishad follow a similar pattern regarding classes held per day. During the summer season schools start from 7.00 AM and give over at 12.00 noon. There is a change of timing during the winter months and school timings are from 10.00 AM to 4.00 PM. Every day therefore schools function for around 5 hours. Although it is claimed that the school time-table is divided in a way

that 8 periods of teaching is done per day, the ground reality is that in a school where the strength of teacher is two or three generally and children are split over five classes. The schools generally have two classrooms and one Verandah which functions as a classroom. In such a situation it is more of an arrangement of convenience of the teachers when he/she switches over from the teaching of one subject to another and between different classes. It is in fact very common to find that while the teacher is teaching in a class, the class which is without a teacher is being taught by the children who are bright and intelligent. Thus if one accounts for the time spent on taking attendance, the 30 minutes of interval everyday and the period earmarked for playing, a teacher on a normal working day can teach upto a maximum of 3 hours and 45 minutes if he/she is an exceptionally dedicated one. However, this is not generally the case and even the good teachers teach for a maximum of around three hours on any full working day.

During the course of our field survey the responses which we received from the concerned headmasters, they were not very frank in admitting whether or not the assistant teachers and Shiksha Mitra posted in the school were attending school regularly. In fact we got no response about irregularity among teachers from Bareilly and Basti. However, on the day of our visit to the various schools of the remaining districts some teachers were found to be absent without any advanced information about their inability to be present in school. Such headmasters admitted that these were a few teachers with whom there is a problem about their regularity and punctuality. In the case of the Shiksha Mitra as well it was reported that they are regular in three districts. The third being Mahoba along with Bareilly and Basti (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Month-wise Details of Actual Teaching Days, Teaching Hours and Leave Taken by Teachers

Details	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
1. <u>Month-wise no. of Teaching days</u>					
July	26	25	26	26	26
August	23	23	24	23	25
September	19	21	20	19	19
October	19	19	18	16	20
November	17	18	17	16	19
December	25	25	24	26	25
January	31	23	23	22	21
2. <u>Teaching Hours</u>					
No. of Periods per day	8	8	8	8	8
In hours	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
3. <u>Regularity of Teachers</u>					
Yes	105	182	141	140	265
No	--	--	3	1	1
4. <u>Regularity of Shiksha Mitra</u>					
Yes	124	197	166	151	335
No	--	--	2	--	1
5. <u>Leave Taken by</u>					
Head Master (Nos.)	61	105	64	63	145
Average days in leave (Last month)	2.30	1.47	2.19	2.22	1.95
Assistant Teacher (Nos.)	80	65	52	67	123
Average days in leave (Last month)	1.44	2.34	1.62	1.96	3.44
Shiksha Mitra (Nos.)	6	17	4	1	22
Average days in leave (Last month)	1.67	1.71	2.00	2.00	7.73
6. <u>Does VECs check Attendance</u>					
Yes	105	182	141	141	255
No	--	--	3	--	11

The school records have given a clean chit to all the three categories of teachers ~~and~~ as far as their regularity was concerned. However, we had some reservations based on the information collected by us regarding the distance which these teachers have been covering each day to come and teach in school and this includes the headmasters as well. In order to cross-check this information we had prepared a small schedule for the Parents and Community Members where we had asked them to provide information regarding these aspects. This information is presented in Table 3.3.

Our apprehension related to teachers reaching school on time is corroborated by the parents from the five selected districts. There was not even one district where parents have reported that teachers come to school on time. There were, of course, wide variations among these districts. Maximum regularity among teachers was found in Basti district where as many as 91 per cent parents have reported that the teachers are regular. The district in which regularity of teachers was reported to be the least was Lalitpur with only 45 per cent response from the parents to state that teachers come to school on time (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Views of Parents/Community Members about Punctuality of Teachers

Views	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
1. Are Teachers coming to school on time					
Yes	100	171	105	116	119
No	19	16	63	30	147
2. Do teachers remain in school till the day's work is over					
Yes	104	170	90	123	119
No	15	17	78	23	147

Not only have the parents complained that teachers come late to school, they have even reported that they are also in the habit of leaving school before the classes are over. Lalitpur once again is the district which has the dubious distinction of being the worst offender with 55 per cent parents reporting that the teachers leave for their residence or to do other work before school timings are over. Next in the list of defaulters is Sultanpur where 46 per cent of the parents have stated that the teachers leave school earlier than the prescribed time. The problem is also present in the remaining three districts but is less acute (Table 3.3).

To sum up, therefore, we may say that despite the fact that the school records claim that teachers are regularly coming to school on time except for a very few cases,

the picture which emerges on the evidence provided by the parents and community members is at variance to it. In the case of Sultanpur, Mahoba and Lalitpur the schools are faced with the problem that teachers are not always reaching school on time. Besides this they even tend to leave the school premises even before school timings are over. The fact that a very high percentage of headmasters and assistant teachers are not residing within the village where the primary schools are located and are residing in places which are at distances upto 70 kms as brought out by the information collected from the teachers themselves. This strengthens the claims made by parents regarding the irregularity of teachers in reaching school.

Taking into account the fact that during the summer season the primary school remain open for five hours on a teaching day, we had made a rough calculation that keeping all the factors in mind a teacher can teach for around 3 hours and 45 minutes per day. This figure had been arrived at by taking into consideration the time earmarked for games, the daily interval and the time taken every day while taking attendance and making the entry regarding total attendance class-wise in the attendance register. This 3 hours 45 minutes is the total time for teaching if the teacher is very dedicated and does his/her work with full devotion and sincerity. However, in a scenario where teachers come to school late and also have the tendency to leave early as well, it is not very easy to assess the actual instructional time devoted by them on a working day. Moreover, on the pretext that 2 or three teachers have to teach children of five classes they generally ask the class monitor or the bright child of the class to teach the rest of the children. All these facts are a pointer in the direction that the actual teaching time is much less than what is expected from the teachers.

CHAPTER IV

IMPACT OF THE REGULARITY OF TEACHERS ON EDUCATION

In the previous chapter we have made an effort to analyze the punctuality of teachers and this was done on the basis of information provided by the headmaster on one hand and on the basis of cross checking the same from parents and community members of the area. The analysis revealed that although school records maintain that very few teachers are irregular, the opinion of the parents was contrary to this. In this chapter, we will now make an effort to try and assess the impact of teacher's punctuality on educational levels. The three objectives to be covered under this chapter are:

Objective No.3. To assess the impact of teacher's punctuality and actual teaching in the classes on the achievement levels of children.

Objective No.5. To estimate single teacher schools in the sample districts.

Objective No.6 To estimate the number of schools closed temporarily due to teacher absenteeism.

As already indicated earlier it was informed by the parents and community members that teachers are coming late to school. If this is the case then it automatically follows that they are not even teaching regularly. Tale 4.1 provides information about teacher absenteeism, regularity in teaching and effects of teacher's irregularity on the quality of education as indicated by the parents and community members.

Table 4.1 points out the fact the problem of absenteeism among teachers is not a serious issue in four of the selected districts. In Sultanpur and Mahoba only around 3-

5 per cent parents have reported absenteeism among the teachers. These percentages are slightly higher in Bareilly and Basti where they were found to be 8 and 11 per cent respectively. Lalitpur is the district where this problem seems to be more acute because absenteeism among teachers is reported by as many as 37 per cent parents. This is a rather high figure and the BSA and his team of ABSA's and BRC coordinators should look into the matter seriously and devise suitable means of tackling the problem. Even the VEC can be asked to become more active and exercise pressure on teachers to put an end to this malpractice. As a result of the absenteeism the schools of Lalitpur have had to remain closed for around 7 days during this session till our field survey was conducted. In the remaining districts, however, the number of days when schools were closed varies between 3 to 5 days.

In a situation where the teachers are in the habit of coming late to school, leave school even before the school time is over and occasionally even remain absent it is a foregone conclusion that even in the context of teaching the children their regularity is questionable. Table 4.1 reveals the fact that in all the five districts selected for the study the parents have reported that not all teachers are teaching regularly. Once again we find wide variations among the five districts. District Basti has emerged as the most efficient district since barely around 7 per cent of the parents have made this complaint. In the case of Bareilly and Mahoba as well the problem is not very acute since we have reports from only around 12-15 per cent parents in this connection. However, in the remaining two districts, viz. Sultanpur and Lalitpur, the situation appears alarming as the dissatisfied parents account for 32 and 53 per cent of the total parents in these two districts respectively. We had further enquired as to who the main defaulters were and the figures provided in Table 4.1 reveal that it is the headmaster as

well as the assistant teachers who are guilty of not teaching regularly. The Shiksha Mitra, on account of their temporary status are not in a position to indulge in such malpractices and we find very few cases of Shiksha Mitra who have not been teaching regularly. As their services are purely temporary they can be terminated if found unsatisfactory. On the other hand they have the incentive that in case they are found to be good they are given reappointment in the next academic session. We have already seen in the previous chapter that a large number of Shiksha Mitra have been getting reappointed for the last 3-4 years. The regular teachers, know fully well that they are permanent and that not much action can be taken against them as they have a very strong union to back them.

Table 4.1: Parents Views about Absenteeism and Regularity of Teachers in Teaching

Views	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
<u>Have schools remained closed because of teacher's absenteeism</u>					
Yes	14	21	8	4	98
No	105	166	160	142	168
Average number of days for which schools remained closed	5	4	3	3	7
<u>Are the teachers teaching regularly?</u>					
Yes	101	174	115	129	124
No	18	13	53	17	142
<u>If No, the number of defaulters</u>					
Headmaster/Assistant	18	17	55	14	154
Shiksha Mitra	4	Nil	14	1	8
<u>Effect of Teachers Irregularity on Quality of Education</u>					
Quality Deteriorates	25	78	161	109	197
No change	32	17	--	21	10
Can't say	62	92	7	16	59

Since teachers are not teaching regularly this is bound to be reflected in the quality of teaching being provided to the children. We also enquired from the parents whether they felt that the quality of teaching suffers because of non-regularity of

teachers. We received a fairly high response in the affirmative from the parents in the districts of Sultanpur, Mahoba and Lalitpur. These are the three main districts where we were told by the parents that teachers are non-regular in attending school on time, tend to leave earlier than the school is over and do not teach regularly. The response was as high as 96 per cent in Sultanpur. In Mahoba and Lalitpur it was around 75 per cent in each district. In Bareilly and Basti only around 21 and 41 per cent parents felt that the quality of teaching deteriorated because of teachers not teaching regularly. This was mainly because in both these districts a majority of teachers are teaching regularly so a small proportion of defaulters is not able to make any adverse effect on the overall quality of teaching. A careful look at the table reveals that these are the two districts where a high percentage of parents were unable to express any firm opinion regarding the effect of irregularity of teaching on the quality of education. Almost 49 per cent of the parents of Basti and over half of them in Bareilly have not expressed any opinion as to whether irregularity of the teacher adversely affects teaching.

We asked the parents whether or not they made any efforts to ensure that teachers come to school on time and teach regularly. Their responses are tabulated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Efforts Made by Parents to Ensure Proper Teaching

Views	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
Reported the cases of irregularity to BSA/ABSA/BRCs	26	40	22	9	62
Raised the issue during VEC Meetings	6	10	18	25	8
Contact with the teachers directly	8	24	31	9	20
Raised the matter with the headmaster	6	--	6	21	9
No effort	73	113	91	82	167

It is rather surprising to see that a high percentage of teachers have not made any effort to raise the issue related to irregularity among teachers in coming to school as well as teaching. The lack of effort in districts of Bareilly, Basti and Mahoba is

understandable because by and large this problem is not acute in these districts as indicated by the parents themselves. However, in the two districts of Sultanpur and Lalitpur around 54 and 63 per cent parents have themselves revealed that no efforts have been made by them in this direction despite the fact that around 74 per cent parents from each of the districts have expressed the opinion that the quality of teaching deteriorates if teachers are not regular. However, in all the districts the most common step taken by parents to counter the problem of teachers' irregularity is to report these cases of the BSA/ABSA or the Co-ordinators of the respective BRCs. The other measures taken have been to raise the issue at the VEC meeting and to make a personal appeal to the teachers themselves. A few parents have even met the headmasters asking them to exert more pressure on their teachers.

During the course of our field survey we not only collected information from the selected primary schools and from the parents, we also spoke to the children regarding the regularity of their teachers. The response which we received from them did not reveal the clear picture because the children were rather afraid to report cases of irregularity. Children from Class I and Class II in fact were not even asked this question. Even the rest were in a dilemma to answer our question and so preferred to remain silent.

In order to assess the performance of the children from the point of view of quality of education we simply asked the children from each class a few questions randomly from the lesson that they had just learnt within a day or two. In the selection of the lesson we took help of the teachers. In as many as 9 out of the 15 blocks we were satisfied with the performance of the children. These included all the three blocks of Sultanpur, two each from Basti, Mahoba and Bareilly. Among the blocks of Lalitpur

the students of Jakhora block were found to be good. In the remaining blocks, however, the performance of children was not upto the mark and in many cases they were unable to do even simple addition or subtraction.

Yet another way of assessing the quality of education being provided in the primary schools and the levels of achievement in them is by looking at the performance of children in the examinations. As per the policy of the state government no child is failed in Class I and II. In the remaining classes also the children who appear in the examinations are generally not failed. Those who perform badly are asked to repeat the examination and then they are promoted to the next class. There are some children who have not been regular throughout the year. In their case the teachers ask their parents not to send them for the examination but to make them repeat the class. Such children are a very small percentage to the total students in the class. Similarly there may be a small percentage which drops out. Thus, the percentage of students passing each year is close to hundred per cent if we work it out on the basis of those who had appeared. However, if we work out the percentage of children who secured over 60 per cent marks in the final examination out of the total students who passed, then the picture is quite different and the same is being presented in Table 4.3 for the years 2003 and 2004. A close look at the table reveals that if we take the performance of children for all the five classes together there is no difference in a district between the two years. For example during 2003 the percentage of children securing over 60 per cent marks in Basti was 31.66 and during 2004 it stood at 31.03. Similarly in Mahoba these percentage were around 31 for both 2003 and 2004 respectively. Even in the other district the variation between the two years was only marginal. However, if we look at the performance among districts we find considerable variations. Lalitpur was

the district with only around 18 per cent children securing over 60 per cent marks in their annual examinations while the percentage was around 48 in the case of Sultanpur which was the best among our five selected districts. In the remaining three districts the percentages were almost the same (around 30-31 per cent). If we go according to class-wise performance the children of Class IV and V have generally performed better than those of the remaining classes in each of the districts and in both 2003 and 2004.

Table 4.3: Percentage of Students who Obtained Above 60 per cent Marks in the Annual Examinations

Class	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
2003					
Class I	29.27	25.75	42.23	27.93	15.85
Class II	29.63	30.18	42.42	28.08	18.54
Class III	26.11	34.55	40.46	31.59	17.77
Class IV	27.06	35.87	42.86	32.83	20.71
Class V	30.74	40.27	47.44	39.04	25.63
Total	28.50	31.66	42.87	31.00	19.02
2004					
Class I	28.79	27.68	43.60	27.85	14.94
Class II	28.91	35.55	46.57	30.52	16.96
Class III	26.75	39.64	48.19	31.15	17.25
Class IV	27.00	23.37	52.21	31.26	18.96
Class V	42.93	33.51	54.26	37.60	23.09
Total	29.67	31.03	48.42	31.06	17.76

One thing that needs to be highlighted here is that the state government has been making various attempts to improve the quality of education. The central government too has been providing support to it for ensuring improvements in the quality. The DIETs for instance have been set up in all districts to train the headmasters, assistant teachers and Shiksha Mitra. They are trained so that they can teach according to the latest teaching and learning materials which have been developed. The NCERT has improved the syllabus of the different subjects and for each

subject teaching manuals have been developed which give details as to how each individual lesson of the text book is to be taught. Even to explain how the teaching manuals are to be followed the teachers are provided training on a subject-wise basis. During the course of our field survey we have received positive response from all teachers regarding the utility of these teaching manuals and whether or not they have been teaching according to these teaching manuals. However, the actual position is contrary to the responses provided in the interview schedules. During our discussion with the teachers, they admitted that it becomes difficult to teach according to the teaching manuals. The main reason for their inability to do so is the fact that there is a shortage of teachers. They have to teach students of more than one class simultaneously and so their attention gets divided between two sets of students. Under these circumstances it is much easier to teach in the conventional way and then allow one of the bright students to control the children while they can attend to the students of the next class.

Under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan the norm which has been laid down is that every primary school should have at least two teachers. We have already pointed out earlier there is a serious shortage of teachers all over the state and our selected districts are no exception. The number of vacant positions against the total sanctioned posts of headmasters and teachers is quite high. We compiled secondary information from our selected districts and blocks pertaining to the number of single teacher schools as well as schools which do not have a regular headmaster. In fact there are also some schools which do not even have a regular assistant teacher and they are being run by Shiksha Mitra only. Some of these details are being provided in Table 4.4. It clearly reveals the gravity of the situation in at least four out of our five selected

districts. In Basti for instance as many as 41 per cent of the total primary schools are single teacher schools. This percentage is 33 in the case of Sultanpur. In Bareilly and Mahoba around 25 and 22 per cent schools respectively are having only one regular teacher. Lalitpur is relatively lucky as only around 6 per cent of the primary schools out of the total schools in the district are single teacher schools. If we take the overall average of the five selected districts then around 28 per cent of the total primary schools are single teacher schools. Even in many of our selected blocks the situation is quite bad. The Sadar block of Basti for example has 47 per cent single teacher schools. In various other blocks this percentage is between 20-30 per cent. As can be expected, the blocks of Lalitpur are lucky in this respect because the overall picture of the district as a whole is quite good from this angle.

Table 4.4: **Details of Single Teacher Schools and those Without a Headmaster in our Selected Districts**

District/Block	No. of Single Teacher School	No. of School without a Headmaster	No. of School run by Shiksha Mitra
1. Bareilly	419 (25%)	698 (41%)	
Kayara	5	4	--
Fathehganj (W)	24	9	3
Bhojipura	9	1	--
2. Basti	573 (41%)	433 (31%)	
Sadar	37	--	--
Kaptanganj	21	1	--
Hariyya	31	2	2
3. Sultanpur	709 (33%)	359 (17%)	
Pratapur Kamechha	23	5	--
Bhadar	19	3	--
Bhetwa	17	3	--
4. Mahoba	134 (22%)	61 (10%)	
Kabrai	63	11	4
Charkari	29	3	1
Jaitpur	17	6	3
5. Lalitpur	52 (6%)	181 (21%)	
Jakhora	11	15	3
Mahrauni	2	11	5
Bar	7	9	1

If we look at schools which are functioning without a regular headmaster we find the situation to be as bad. The situation is worst in Bareilly where around 41 per cent of the primary school do not have a regular headmaster. This was followed by Basti with 31 per cent schools not having a headmaster. The best district was Mahoba where this figure was only 10 per cent. Fortunately among our selected blocks the situation was much better as compared to the selected districts.

As a result of such a high percentage of single teacher schools and schools without a regular headmaster the quality of education is bound to suffer and so it is unfair to put the entire blame on the teachers for not bringing about qualitative improvements in education. In the case of Mahoba and Lalitpur we found in each of our selected blocks primary schools which are being run fully by Shiksha Mitra. No such school was found in Sultanpur while two schools in Basti and three in Bareilly were without any regular teacher.

Since the Shiksha Mitra are performing such an important role by compensating for the shortage of teachers we had a small section in our school schedule where we asked them some questions related to their training and problems which they face. Almost all of them were satisfied with the training which was being provided to them before being posted to the school and the refresher course which they attend on being reappointed. However, a fairly large number of them feel that a one-month training is not sufficient keeping in mind the syllabus which is an improved one and also because while teaching they have to follow the teaching manuals properly. This requires a sound knowledge of how to use the teaching manuals. The general opinion expressed was that pre-job orientation course should be for a duration of 3-4 months if they are to

fully understand how the latest teaching and learning material is to be efficiently utilized and a proper impact is to be made on the quality of education at the primary level (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5: Perception of Shiksha Mitras

Perception	Name of the District				
	Bareilly	Basti	Sultanpur	Mahoba	Lalitpur
1. Training provided to you was of good quality:					
Yes	103	180	136	141	265
No	3	2	8	--	1
2. If No, improvement needed:					
Training should be good quality	3	2	8	--	1
3. Duration of Training was sufficient:					
Yes	37	95	72	90	127
No	68	87	72	51	139
4. If No, average number of months	4	3	3	4	4
5. Do you feel disadvantage as compared to regular teacher:					
Yes	62	146	115	79	130
No	42	36	29	62	136
6. If Yes disadvantage are:					
Excessive work	14	71	58	16	44
Problem in teaching manual	45	36	13	27	31
Less salary	29	67	29	21	64
No provision of leave	10	44	93	48	39
Service only for 10 months	14	15	28	22	38
Problem during reappointment	18	14	33	30	32
Not timely payment of salary	12	18	65	24	14

A high percentage of the Shiksha Mitra in all districts except one feel that they are at a disadvantageous position as compared to the regular teachers. Around 80 per cent Shiksha Mitra expressed this opinion. Only Lalitpur was the district where this percentage was below fifty per cent. Coming to the disadvantages there were multiple responses and the responses varied from one district to another. In Bareilly for example the single most important disadvantage identified was that because of the short duration of training they find it difficult to use teaching manuals. In the case of Basti and Lalitpur the Shiksha Mitra felt that they were getting a very low salary in comparison to their workload. The main concern of this category of teachers in

Sultanpur and Mahoba was that there was no provision of leave for them (Table 4.5). Some of the other problems which have been identified by the Shiksha Mitra are that they get paid for only 10 months whereas they should get paid for a full year particularly if they are given reappointment. Even the procedure of initial appointment and renewal during the next academic session is a tedious and time consuming one. Moreover, they are not always paid their salaries on time.

We have in this chapter looked at the issues such as impact of teachers punctuality on educational levels, the existence of single teacher schools and the issue of teacher absenteeism. These aspects conform to the three objectives which we had proposed to cover.

- (i) To sum up therefore we may say that if we analyse the issue on the basis of information received by us from the parents and other community members it is found that teachers are not coming to school on time and not teaching regularly in at least two districts namely Sultanpur and Lalitpur. It is not that in other districts this problem is not found but its intensity is much less. Consequently the parents feel that because of this failing on the part of the teachers the quality of education is certainly suffering.

The State government has been following a policy of not failing students but the percentage of students attaining over 60 per cent marks in the final examination is not very high in any of the five districts. Only in the case of Sultanpur it was found to be around 48 per cent during 2004. Even our own assessment of children in the selected schools was that in 9 out of the 15 blocks the performance of children was satisfactory but the same was not the case in around five blocks.

- (ii) The shortage of teachers is adequately reflected in the total number of schools which have a single teacher only. It was found that as many as 41 per cent of the schools of Basti and 33 per cent of Sultanpur were in this category. Similarly we have a total of 41 per cent schools of Bareilly and another 31 per cent in Basti which are functioning without a regular headmaster.
- (iii) As far as teacher absenteeism is concerned the problem is not a serious one in any of the five districts except for Lalitpur. In all the districts the schools have remained closed for 3-7 days in the five districts. However, if we look at the problem in the light of teachers not coming regularly and not remaining in school till the school is over, it is a matter of concern and needs to be looked into seriously.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Elementary education is very essential because while it makes people literate, it also opens the avenue for them to attain higher education. Thus, not only is it essential that every child must have easy access to elementary education but what is equally important is that the quality of education being provided should be good if an effective base for human capital development is to be achieved. Initially the DPEP and now the SSA programmes have been stressing on bringing about qualitative improvements in education. To achieve this it is essential to ensure the full co-operation from the teachers. Unfortunately, the total number of regular teachers working in the primary schools of the state is much below the actual number of sanctioned positions. To counter the problem of this shortage the government has introduced the concept of Shiksha Mitra. They are selected by the Village Panchayat and are appointed for one academic session at a time and paid a stipend of Rs.2250 per month. In case their work is satisfactory they may be appointed for the next academic session.

While the government is making efforts to supplement the shortage of teachers with these para teachers and striving to improve the quality of teaching it is necessary that the teachers should be going to school regularly and on time and teach regularly on the basis of the new techniques developed by institutions like NCERT, etc. The State Institute for Educational Management and Training, Allahabad entrusted the task to the Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow to look into the aspect of regularity of

teachers and to assess the quality teaching which they are imparting. The study was conducted with the following objectives.

5.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (i) To find out the percentage of Teachers/Shiksha Mitra who come to school on time as well as that of Teachers and Shiksha Mitras who are irregular.
- (ii) To assess the actual instructional time given by teachers in classes on a working day.
- (iii) To assess the impact of teacher's punctuality and actual teaching in the class on the achievement level of children.
- (iv) To seek the opinion of parents, students and the headmaster regarding teacher punctuality.
- (v) To estimate single teacher schools in the sample districts.
- (vi) To estimate the number of schools closed temporarily due to teacher absenteeism.

5.3 METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE SIZE

The study is mainly based on primary information collected from the primary schools of five districts identified by SIEMAT, Allahabad. From each district three blocks were selected with the help of the BSA and ABSAs. Once the blocks were identified then all those schools in which Shiksha Mitra were posted were surveyed. The sample covered by us therefore included:

1.	Number of Districts	5
2.	Number of Blocks	15
3.	Number of Primary Schools	838

For collecting primary information two sets of schedules were developed. The first was to collect information about the schools, teachers and students. The second schedule was designed to obtain the views of the parents and community members about the regularity of the teachers.

Besides this we also collected secondary Information from the office of the concerned BSA's and from our selected BRCs to supplement the primary information collected through field survey.

We will now highlight the main findings of the study on an objective-wise basis.

5.4 OBJECTIVE-WISE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

For the sake of the convenience and suitability we will be changing the sequence in which we take up each objective. However, we will leave the number unaltered so as to avoid any confusion.

5.4.1 Objective No.1: To find out the percentage of teachers/Shiksha Mitra who come to school on time as well as those who are irregular.

The schedule which had been developed for the primary schools had questions related to the punctuality with which both the regular teachers as well as Shiksha Mitra come to school. These details were provided to us by the headmaster or the assistant teacher who had been holding charge of a headmaster in the few schools which did not have a regular headmaster. Thus the responses which we received indicated towards the fact that the teachers are very punctual. In fact not even a single school from either Bareilly or Basti districts reported irregularity among the teachers or even the Shiksha Mitra. Only one school each from Mahoba and Lalitpur and three from Sultanpur were the only schools from our entire sample of 838 schools where the headmasters admitted that some regular teachers are not punctual. In the case of Shiksha Mitra there were only two districts, viz. Sultanpur and Lalitpur where some level of irregularity was reported even among the Shiksha Mitra. So if we were to go purely by the evidence of the school then there was every reason to believe that teachers are very regular and reach school on time.

However, based on our information regarding the residence of the headmasters as well as assistant teachers some doubts were raised regarding the validity of what was reported in the survey schedules of the schools. The same survey schedule had provided detailed information about headmasters, assistant teachers and Shiksha Mitra who were either staying within the village where the schools are located or outside. In the case of the headmasters in Bareilly only around 16 per cent of them were living within the village while the percentage was 20 and 20 in the case of Basti and Sultanpur respectively. The districts of Mahoba and Lalitpur were relatively better off. Not only were the headmasters not living within the village, many of them were coming from distances of upto 60 kms. Similarly, even the assistant teachers were mainly residing away from the school where they were posted. Bareilly once again headed the list since barely 9 per cent assistant teachers were residing within the same village. In Basti and Sultanpur this figure continued to be what it was in the case of headmasters (around 20 per cent). Mahoba and Lalitpur were once again relatively better off. The maximum distance which any assistant teacher was covering daily to come to school was 70 kms. As a result of the considerable distance which the headmasters and assistant teachers are covering, they are taking between half an hour to 45 minutes to reach school and mode of transport varies between bus, rail and tempo to personal means such as cycle or motorcycle. It is, therefore, doubtful whether the information provided about their regularity was correctly reported to us.

5.4.2 Objective No.4: To seek the opinion of parents, students and the headmasters regarding teacher punctuality.

Since doubts were raised in our mind regarding the punctuality of teachers we thought it appropriate to cross-check the information provided by the headmasters

from the parents and the students. The students, as could be expected were not in a position to speak against their teachers even if some of them were in the habit of coming to school late or leave early or even remain absent. We, therefore, did not pressurize them too much since even the teachers were present in the class when we were having a discussion with them.

However, the parents and other community members with whom we interacted were much more forthright in their criticism wherever the teachers were either coming late to school or leaving school even before school timings were over. Looking at both these aspects it was revealed that there are two districts in which the teachers are not coming to school on time and are also in the habit of leaving earlier than what they are expected to. This problem seems to be most alarming in Lalitpur since around 55 per cent parents/community members have reported problem of late arrival by teachers and also that they do not observe the full working hours. The other district where problems of a similar nature are found is Sultanpur where around 37 per cent parents have reported that teachers are not coming to school on time and 46 per cent reported that they do not remain in school till the school timings are over. Although these problems have also been reported from the remaining three districts as well, the intensity of the problem is much less since a much lower proportion of parents have made such a complaint. What is important is that this problem is not just with the assistant teachers but even with the headmasters. Fortunately the Shiksha Mitra are quite regular in coming to school on time and staying back till the days work is over. Thus, it is found that despite the fact that the school register does not show this fact the regular teachers are in the habit of coming late and even tend to leave early.

5.4.3 Objective No.2: To assess the actual instructional time given by the teachers in class on a working day.

The schools run by the Basic Shiksha Parishad, U.P. follow a similar time table all over the state. During the summer season schools open at 7.00 AM and teaching continues upto 12.00 noon. During the winter season, on the other hand, teaching begins at 10.00 AM and lasts till 4.00 PM. Thus the schools remain open for around five hours a day during summer months. On any working day the normal routine which schools follow is that they have about 8 periods. In actual practice teaching is not followed strictly on the basis of periods. This is primarily because a primary school generally has 2-3 teachers only and they have to teach children of five classes. Managing teaching of children from Class I to Class V is by itself an issue involving time management. The normal pattern, which a teacher follows, is that they start teaching work in any one class. After spending some time in taking attendance and initiating teaching in the class they move into the next class and spend some time with students of that class. In this way teachers circulate among children of different classes. While children of any class are without a teacher the responsibility of looking after the children and even reading out lessons is given by the teacher to some child who is either the class monitor or is among the intelligent children. During the days work there is generally a games period during which children play and then there is the break for half-time. If we take all these factors into consideration then around an hour or so is to be deducted. We are, therefore, left with around 3 hours 45 minutes of actual teaching time. So, if a teacher is fully devoted to teaching then also this is the maximum time period which he can devote to teaching.

However, if we also discount for the fact that teachers come late to school and leave early the actual time for teaching at their disposal gets reduced further.

Moreover, it is well known that they leave teaching in the hands of the class monitor on the pretext of having to teach two or more classes simultaneously. In the light of these issues it is really difficult to assess the actual teaching time given by the teachers. The time actually spent by the teacher is directly proportional to his degree of devotion and sense of responsibility.

5.4.4 Objective No.3: To assess the impact of teachers punctuality and actual teaching in class on the achievement levels of children.

We have evidence that a very large proportion of the headmasters and assistant teachers are residing outside the village and distances covered by them are such that they are spending even upto 45 minutes per day to reach school. Even the evidences provided by the parents have confirmed our fears that there are teachers who not only are in the habit of coming late to school but also leave school early. It therefore automatically follows that some percentage of teachers must also be falling into the category of those who are not teaching regularly. Information regarding this aspect has once again been based on the feedback provided to us by the parents and community members. The problem of non-regularity in teaching is mainly confined to those two districts in which teachers were not regularly attending school. Once again Lalitpur emerges as the main defaulter with around 53 per cent parents complaining that teachers are not teaching regularly. The other problematic district is Sultanpur although to a lower extent since irregularity in teaching is reported by around one-third of the total parents who were contacted by us. Bareilly, Basti and Mahoba are the districts where this problem is not a serious one. What is interesting to note is that this problem is being mainly found among the headmasters and assistant teachers. The Shiksha Mitra are not only regular in coming to school but also in teaching. This is because their appointment is purely on an ad-hoc basis and made for one academic session at a time.

It is, therefore, in their interest to be punctual in attending school as well as in teaching because those Shiksha Mitras whose work is found satisfactory get reappointed in the next academic session as well.

The parents strongly feel that if teachers are non-regular in teaching it is bound to have an adverse effect on the quality of teaching and also on the achievement levels of children. We have tried to analyze the achievement levels of children through two different means. We have tried to see how many children have attained over 60 per cent marks in the annual examinations. These records were available from the respective schools. The other method for analyzing achievement was done by asking the students from different classes questions based on what they were learning at the time of our visit.

As far as passing the examinations is concerned, the state government has adopted the policy of not failing children in Class I and Class II. Consequently, irrespective of his/her level of achievement all the children who are enrolled in a primary school automatically reach upto Class III. In the remaining three classes there is a provision of asking children to repeat the papers in case they have not done well and so even those who had not done well are also ultimately promoted. There is, therefore, a very small proportion of students who either drop out or are even asked by the teachers to repeat the class. Thus the percentage of actual children failing in class is more or less negligible. However, when we look at their achievements from the point of view of marks secured by them in the final examination it was revealed that during the year 2004 Sultanpur was the only district where around 48 per cent children got over 60 per cent marks in the aggregate in the annual examinations. The performance of the children comes as a pleasant surprise because Sultanpur is one of the two

districts where irregularity among teachers in coming to school is relatively high, and teachers also leave school early and do not teach regularly. The district with lowest share of children securing over 60 per cent marks in the annual examination was Lalitpur with a share of around 18 per cent only and this as we know was the most problematic district from the point of view of irregular teaching. In all the remaining districts around 30 per cent of the total children in school have secured 60 per cent or more marks in the annual examination of 2004. These percentages are not very high and could have been better if the teachers were regular in teaching and also if they had properly followed the pattern of teaching as developed in the teaching manual which have been prepared for all subjects and all classes. They are already available in each school and the teachers have been trained to use them as well.

Coming to our own assessment, we followed the simple procedure of asking children questions based on the lesson which was being taught to them on the day of our visit to the concerned school. In 9 out of the 15 blocks we were satisfied with the performance of the children in class. These included all the three blocks of Sultanpur and two each from Bareilly, Basti and Mahoba. Thus the records, which showed a relatively high percentage of children securing over 60 per cent marks in the annual examination seems justified and correct. In the remaining blocks the childrens performance was not upto the mark with the sole exception of a few schools of Jakhora block of Lalitpur where the children were bright and answered questions correctly and with confidence.

5.4.5 Objective No.5: To estimate single teacher schools in the sample districts.

Every primary school has students from Class I to Class V. Moreover, the number of children in the primary schools is sizeable. In fact there are some schools where the

enrolment level could be quite substantial. Thus the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme envisages that all primary schools must have at least a minimum of two regular teachers. From the point of view of teacher-pupil ratio the norm prescribed under SSA is that there should be a maximum of 40 students for every teacher. Because of the acute shortage of teachers the teacher pupil ratio is nowhere near the prescribed norm and despite all the laid down norms we are still faced with a situation where a fairly sizeable number of primary schools are having one regular teacher only. A similar picture is found in each of our selected districts although there are variations among the five districts. The district which has the highest number of single teacher schools is Basti where as many as 41 per cent schools fall in this category. In Sultanpur this percentage is around 33 per cent. Even in Bareilly and Mahoba where the problem is relatively less acute even in them around one-fourth schools are having a single teacher. Lalitpur is the only district which is enjoying the luxury of having as many as 94 per cent schools with two or more regular teachers. Not only is the situation bad from the point of view of single teacher schools we also have a high percentage of schools which are functioning without a regular headmaster. Bareilly heads our selected districts in this connection with 41 per cent schools functioning without a regular headmaster. Basti is ranked two with a total of 31 per cent schools not having a headmaster. Among the five districts the best placed is Mahoba with only around 10 per cent schools falling in this category.

During the course of our survey we even came across as many as 22 schools which have no regular teacher at all and are being run with the help of a Shiksha Mitra.

In a situation where you have single teacher schools, schools without a regular headmaster or schools being run with the services of a Shiksha Mitra one can easily

understand the stresses and strains which the teachers must be facing and this could also be reflecting on the quality of education being provided by such schools.

5.4.6 Objective No.6: To estimate the number of schools closed temporarily due to teacher absenteeism.

Teacher absenteeism can be another factor which can adversely affect the overall environment of the school as well as the quality of teaching. Fortunately teacher absenteeism is not a serious problem in our selected districts with the sole exception of Lalitpur. Around 37 per cent parents have reported the tendency of absenteeism among the teachers in that district. The cases of absenteeism reported in Sultanpur and Mahoba are reported from barely around 5 per cent parents while in the other two districts around 10-12 per cent parents have reported that there is absenteeism among the teachers. As a result of this schools have had to remain closed in all districts during the present academic session. Lalitpur, as can be expected was the worst sufferer because if we take the average of the 266 schools, they have remained closed for an average of around 7 days during this session. In the remaining districts the average number of days for which schools had to be closed varies from 3 to 5.

5.5 CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Having covered all the objectives of our study we may conclude that there are problems in the primary schools of the five selected districts. Two districts, viz. Lalitpur and Sultanpur are the more problematic among the five. As a result, the quality of education tends to suffer mainly in Lalitpur. If things are to improve for the better the government should be able to devise means through which the regularity of teachers and their punctuality in teaching can be assured. Once this is achieved it will also automatically be reflected in improvements in the quality of education.

5.5.1 To tackle the problem of teachers coming late, leaving school early and absenteeism the following measures may be taken.

The BSA, ABSA and SDI already have the power to conduct inspection of schools to ensure that teachers are coming on time as well as teaching regularly. However, despite these powers they are not very effective because it is not possible for the ABSAs to inspect schools very regularly since there are so many schools under one ABSA. The ABSAs express their inability to visit schools on a regular basis because of the pressure of work on them.

The VEC on the other hand is a committee comprising of local people. They have access to the school and can be asked to inspect schools regularly to check punctuality of teachers. If this can be ensured then the teachers including headmasters will be under pressure to be regular. All the case of irregularity can be reported to BSA and concerned ABSA by the members of the VEC and then appropriate action can be taken against teachers who are irregular. Thus a proper co-ordination is required between the VEC and the BSA and his team of ABSAs.

5.5.2 Problem of single teacher schools leads to all sorts of problems. In the first place it is not possible for the teacher to control the students of five classes simultaneously. Teaching them is even more difficult without any helping hand. Moreover, the teachers are away from school when on official duty. In such an eventuality schools close down. Examples of such a situation are when the teacher has to report to either the DIET or BRC for some training. There are a number of training programmes organised by the DIET for different categories of teachers, viz. headmasters, assistant teachers and Shiksha Mitra and their duration varies depending on the nature of training. Similarly in a situation when the teacher is on leave on account of illness or any other reason, the

schools automatically close down if they are single teacher schools. In all such situations teaching suffers.

In contrast to these single teacher schools there are also schools where the strength of teachers is more in proportion to the actual strength of students enrolled in them. The first thing which the state administration can do, is to make a list of single teacher schools on one hand and schools with surplus teachers on the other. These surpluses should then be transferred to schools which are being managed with a single teacher. The government has to have a very strict policy related to transfer of teachers. Not that a transfer policy does not exist but what is often seen is that in case a teacher is transferred to a school which does not suit him/her for any reason, every possible effort is made by the teacher to cancel his/her transfer. There are cases where teachers have gone on medical leave and during this time used their political and other links to get their transfer orders cancelled.

It has been pointed out that the problem of shortage of teachers primarily stems from the fact that the total number teachers who are presently working is much below the sanctioned strength of teachers. Reasons attributed to this shortfall are factors such as resource constraints, non-availability of teachers in some specific subjects and non-availability of suitable candidates from the reserve categories. In fact, the gap between sanctioned posts and actual appointments has been increasing because while a number of these teachers attain the age of superannuation every year, even they are not being fully replaced. One can understand a resource crunch for fresh appointment but at least the administration can fill all the positions which fall vacant every year when both headmasters and assistant teachers retire. In this way the backlog will at least remain at a constant level.

Moreover, when the SSA programme is committed to improving the quality of education it has to tackle this problem of shortage of teachers. The government has laid the norm of at least 2 teachers in every primary school and so it has to devise means of achieving this objective. Each year funds are allocated for the SSA programme to the state. It must contain at least some amount towards appointment of teachers as well and ensure that vacant positions are filled in a phased manner. If such a policy measure is adopted then too the backlog of vacant positions can be cleared without imposing too much burden on the state exchequer.

And finally, the state has already devised a cheaper alternative to counter the problem of shortage of regular teachers. This is through the appointment of Shiksha Mitra. They are selected from the Gram Sabha under which the school comes and first preference is given to the village itself where the primary school is located. Their appointment leads to a relatively less burden on state finances as they are paid a fixed amount of Rs.2250 per month for the services rendered by them. However, the method adopted for their selection and appointment is such that it needs serious modifications. Under the present conditions considerable time is taken in their identification by the Pradhan and making a merit list. This list then goes to the BSA office which scrutinizes the cases and makes the appointment. Before actual posting they have to undergo a one month orientation course during which they are familiarized with the syllabus and how to teach according to the teaching manuals. Quite often this entire process runs into months and so by the time they are posted in the schools it may be possible that half the academic session is over. Similarly when they are to be reappointed during the next session the entire selection procedure has to be repeated and even in the next year the reappointed Shiksha Mitra have to take a refresher training course before

being posted to a primary school. Added to this is the problem that some of those candidates who are not selected appeal in the court and the whole process may get a setback if the court passes a stay order. Therefore, there is an urgent need to simplify the entire selection procedure for appointment of the Shiksha Mitra or the very purpose for their appointment tends to get defeated.

5.5.3 In order to achieve improvement in the quality of education and levels of achievement among children the first step will automatically have been taken once schools have adequate teachers. It has already been highlighted how teaching suffers because teachers are inadequate to handle the pressures of the school.

The NCERT has developed teaching manuals for each subject on a class-wise basis and it gives instructions on how each lesson is to be taught. These manuals have been developed keeping in mind the latest teaching techniques so that the lesson becomes easy and interesting for the children. Besides this other teaching and learning materials are also developed. In fact, every teacher of the primary school is provided Rs.500 per annum to develop such materials and then to utilize the same while teaching. The DIET provides training to teachers on how to use the TLM. Although in the course of our survey the teachers claim that they are using these teaching aids but the ground reality is quite different. Only a very small percentage of the teachers are making use of TLM on a regular basis. The DIET has been established with the BRC and NPRC as its supporting institutions to provide academic support to the schools for bringing about qualitative improvements in education. However, there are a number of DIETs which are functioning without a Principal and Vice Principal and have lectures and senior lectures much below the required strength. Under these circumstances they too are not able to provide academic support upto the desired level. The government

must also look into the staff positions of the DIETs and ensure that teachers are provided proper training for the use of TLM and that adequate follow up measures are then taken to ensure that the latest teaching methods are also being practiced by all teachers.

5.5.4 The Shiksha Mitra have now become an important factor in the entire teaching process. We have already indicated that there are primary schools being run exclusively by Shiksha Mitra only despite the fact that the number of such schools is very small. The other aspect is that since their appointment is purely temporary and they are working on the incentive that good performance from them will result in their reappointment in the next academic session. It is, therefore, quite normal to find that the Shiksha Mitra are regular in going to school as well as while teaching and are proving to be as good at teaching as the regular teachers. However, they deserve to get more credit for their work. Some time has lapsed since their remuneration was fixed. Since then the regular teachers have not only enjoyed increases in pay on the basis of annual increment but also because of the enhancements in the rates of DA which take place twice every year. It would, therefore, be appropriate if a suitable increment be made in their remunerations as well. Yet another problem which they face regarding their remuneration is that it is not paid on time. There are instances when they have had to wait for a couple of months before the remuneration was released. Besides this, under the existing rules the Shiksha Mitra are not entitled to leave of any kind. So if he is absent on account of illness or any other social commitment his salary can be deducted for those numbers of days while he was on leave. Thus this is yet another aspect which needs to be given a serious thought. Since the Shiksha Mitra are

appointed on an ad-hoc basis they may be entitled to say 6-8 casual leaves during the academic session.

5.5.5 One of the major complaints made by the teacher^s is that they are involved in work besides teaching such as polling duty, census duty, duty of pulse polio, construction of school building, etc. However, the work related polling and pulse polio is generally on a holiday and so teaching does not suffer. However, even though pulse polio day falls on a Sunday, the teachers have to remain engaged for the next two days as well trying to cover those children who could not be administered polio drops on the appointed day. It is the responsibility related to building construction which certainly is undesirable. In the first place even if only an additional classroom is to be constructed it means involvement of at least 15-20 days. Moreover, most teachers do not have proper knowledge regarding construction work and so can not be expected to supervise the work properly either. Since the Pradhan is the main person involved, the second person who may be involved can be another VEC member. Besides this although on paper the teachers are not involved with mid-day meal but in actual practice they have been involved since they have to certify the total number of children who were provided meals every day during the month. It is on the basis of this certification that the payments are released. If the objective of attaining higher standards in the level of education is to be achieved then the extra burden of work on the teachers should be minimised as far as possible.

5.5.6 The situation as it stands today is that as soon as schools re-open in July the teachers prepare a list of children who are eligible for scholarships and their names are sent to the government for the release of their scholarship. The eligible children are given the scholarship amount around September or October. The teachers and even

some members of the Village Education Committee are of the opinion that scholarship must not be released so soon. It should be paid towards the end of the academic session and there should be pressure on the parents to send their children to school regularly and also insist that they should study regularly. During the period when mid-day meal was paid in the form of ration, the eligibility criterion adopted was that the child must have 80 per cent recorded attendance. A similar qualifying condition needs to be adopted for the distribution of scholarship.

To sum up, therefore, we may say that although there are some problems related to the regularity of teachers and that in turn reflects on the quality of teaching, the problems are not unsurmountable. However, it will require a concerted effort on the part of the administration to devise suitable measures as indicated by us. It must of course be borne in mind that the policy measures will have to be implemented very strictly otherwise the desired results will not be achieved. For example the state government already has a transfer policy which is not being properly implemented. Similarly while there was a qualifying clause for distribution of ration under the mid-day meal scheme the parents and other community members exerted pressure on the school authorities and even children with low attendance were all provided ration. Thus, it may be stated that the government will have to remain strict not only with respect to its teachers but also with the children. Once the policies formulated are implemented properly the objectives of regularity in teaching, and in attaining improvement in the quality of education will be easily achieved.

**ASSESSMENT OF PUNCTUALITY OF TEACHERS/SHIKSHA
MITRA AND ITS IMPACT ON QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

[QUESTIONNAIRE]

Study Sponsored by:

**STATE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING
ALLAHABAD**

Study Conducted by:

**GIRI INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
Sector O, Aliganj Housing Scheme
LUCKNOW 226 024**

2005

ASSESSMENT OF PUNCTUALITY OF TEACHERS/SHIKSHA MITRA AND ITS IMPACT ON QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Section 1: School Information

- 1.1 District _____ 1.2 Block _____
- 1.3 Village & School Name _____
- 1.4 School Timings: (a) Summer _____ (b) Winter _____
- 1.5 Category of School (A,B,C or D): (a) Present _____ (b) Earlier _____
- 1.6 Strength of Children (2005): Total _____ Class I _____
Class II _____ Class III _____
Class IV _____ Class V _____
- 1.7 Average Daily Attendance (%) _____
- 1.8 Infrastructure of the School:
- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| (a) Number of Class Rooms | _____ | | | |
| (b) Head Master/Teacher Room | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) Verandah | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) Playground | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (e) Boundary Wall | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (f) Drinking Water | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (g) Toilet | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (h) Tat-Patti/Black Boards | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (i) Teaching & Learning Material | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (j) Electricity | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section 2: Details of Teachers and Teaching

2.1 Teacher-wise Information:

Category of Teachers	Age (Years)	Sex		Educational Qualification	Year of Joining Service	Year of Present Posting	Pre- Service Training in the DIET (Yes/No)	On-job training in DIET/BRC (Yes/No)
		Male	Female					
Head Master								
Assistant Teacher	1							
	2							
	3							
Shiksha Mitra	1							
	2							
Total								

2.2 Average No. of periods per day _____

2.3 Average No. of teaching hours per day _____

2.4 Do teachers come to school on time daily? Yes ☐ No ☐

2.5 If No, how many defaulters? _____

2.6 Do teachers leave school only after teaching hours are over? Yes ☐ No ☐

If No, how many defaulters? _____

2.7 Month-wise details of actual teaching:

Month	July	August	September	October	November	December	January
Days							

2.8 Leave taken by teachers month-wise in Jan & Feb 2005.

2.8 Leave taken by teachers Month wise								(Days)
Teachers	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	Total Leave
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								

2.9 Are there any teachers who are in the habit of remaining absent on a regular basis?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2.10 If Yes, how many? _____

2.11 How do you deal with:

(a) Late comers _____

(b) Those who leave early _____

(c) Those in the habit of remaining absent _____

2.12 Between July and January has the school remained closed on any day because of teachers being absent?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2.13 If yes, how many days _____

2.14 Was the ABSA, SDI, Co-ordinator BRC informed about it?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2.15 If Yes, what action was taken? _____

2.16 Do you think that the achievement level of the children is directly related to regularity of teachers?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2.17 If Yes, to what degree: High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐

2.18 How regularly are inspections conducted by:

Officials	Monthly	Quarterly	Half-Yearly
(a) ABSA/SDI			
(b) Co-Ordinator BRC			
(c) Co-Ordinator BPRC			
(d) VEC Chairman/Member			

2.19 Do they check the attendance of Teachers?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2.19 How good are the Shiksha Mitra in your school as compared to the regular teachers?

20

Equally Good ☐ Good ☐ Not so Good ☐

Section 3: Perception and Views of Teachers/Shiksha Mitra

3.1 Where is your residence:

Teacher/Shiksha Mitra	Within the Village	Outside	Distance (Kms)	Time taken to reach school	Mode of conveyance	Reason for Staying Outside
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

3.2 Do you make use of the Teaching Manuals while teaching? Yes ☐ No ☐

3.3 Are they useful? Yes ☐ No ☐

3.4 If you are not using them why not? _____

3.5 Do you prepare teaching/learning material every year? Yes ☐ No ☐

3.6 How useful do you find it while teaching children?

Very Helpful ☐ Helpful ☐ Not very Helpful ☐

3.7 Since July how many days have you been busy with non-teaching activities like construction of school building, participation in government programmes like pulse-polio, etc. (mid-day meal)?

3.8 Do these activities affect teaching? Yes No

3.9 How can the quality of education be improved?

Section 4: Views of Shiksha Mitra

- 4.1 Was the training provided to you of good quality? Yes ☐ No ☐
- 4.2 If No, what improvements are needed? _____
- 4.3 Was the duration of training sufficient? Yes ☐ No ☐
- 4.4 If No, what should the duration be (month) _____
- 4.5 As a Shiksha Mitra do you feel you have any disadvantage as compared to the regular teachers? Yes ☐ No ☐
- 4.6 If Yes, what are the disadvantages?
- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Excessive Work | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Qualification | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Problem in Teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> | Problem with Teaching Manuals | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- Any Other (specify) _____

Points for Discussion with Parents/Community Leaders

1. Are teachers attending school and teaching regularly?

Yes ☐

No ☐

2. If ~~Yes~~^{No}, who are the defaulters?

3. During this year has school remained closed because of teacher's absence?

Yes ☐

No ☐

4. If Yes, on how many days?

5. Do teachers come to school on time?

Yes ☐

No ☐

6. Do they remain in school till teaching continues?

Yes ☐

No ☐

7. What is the effect of teachers' irregularity on the quality of education?

Quality has suffered ☐

No change ☐

Can't Say ☐

8. What efforts have you made to ensure that teachers are punctual and that they teach regularly?

9. What steps can the Basic Shiksha Parishad take to ensure punctuality of teachers, regular teaching and improvement in the quality of education?

Secondary Information to be Collected from District (BSA Office)

1. Total No. of Primary Parishad Schools _____
2. Total Teachers: _____

Type of Teachers	Working		Actual Sanctioned Post
	Male	Female	
Head Masters			
Assistant Teachers			
Shiksha Mitra			

3. Total Students Enrolled: Boys _____ Girls _____ Total _____
4. Total Number of Single Teacher (Regular) Schools _____
5. Distribution of Schools by Grading:
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____